2. Since 1995, the Pulse Polio Immunization Campaign is being held every year on two specific dates for administering Oral Polio Vaccine to all children in the country below five years of age.

3. The programme has been further strengthened by the launching of a Surveillance Project for detecting all cases of Polio and taking timely action for controlling the transmission of Polio Virus.

Debarring the CGHS Beneficiaries without Family Photographs

2028. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the CGHS beneficiares are being denied CGHS facilities for not having affixed group-photo of the family;

(b) whether it is a fact that the cost of photograph is borne by the beneficiary who is subscribing for CGHS every month;

(c) if so, whether it is not violative under the Consumer Protection Act to deny CGHS facilities to the subscribers; and

(d) whether Government would direct the CGHS authorities not to deny medical facilities to the beneficiaries on the ground of their not having affixed photographs on CGHS cards.

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) No, Sir, as no such complaint has been received from any CGHS beneficiary in this regard.

(b) Yes, Sir. However, the cost of family photograph is nominal.

(c) CGHS is a heavily subsidised Government scheme and its services are not covered under the Consumer Protection Act. Hence, it is not a violation of the said Act.

(d) In view of (a) above, the question does not arise.

Affixing of Family Photograph on CGHS Cards

2029. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made it compulsory for all the CGHS beneficiaries to fix the photographs of all their family members on their CGHS Token Cards; and

(b) if so, the reasons necessitating such cumbersome provision which is quite expensive for the salaried class people?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Yes, Sir. However, children below the age of five years have been exempted from it.

(b) The cost of the family photograph is nominal and it has been introduced to prevent the misuse of CGHS cards by non-CGHS beneficiaries etc.

Schemes for Leprosy Patients

2030. SHRI RAHAS BIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing incidents of laprosy in the country;

(b) if so, the steps taken to provide proper treatment for the laprosy, eradication of leprosy and rehabilitation of leprosy patients after they are fully cured; and

(c) the details of the schemes prepared thereon for Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (c) There is no increase in incidence of leprosy in the country.

However, steps have been taken by the Ministry of Health to provide MDT to all leprosy patients free of cost with the objective of achieving elimination of leprosy as a public health problem by reducing the care load to less than one per 10,000 by 2000 A.D. The Ministry of Welfare have a scheme for providing assistance to voluntary organisations for rehabilitations of leprosy cured patients.

During the 9th Plan period this Ministry will continue to implement the National Leprosy Eradication Programme as done during the 8th Plan with an objective to further reduce morbidity due to leprosy.